aware of. A drought like situation prevailed in the entire Vanancal region.

I would like to urge the Government to conduct a survey in those blocks where production of crop is only 30-40 percent and provide some relief there. I have know about Ichagarh. Chandel. Namdi. Sonahatu. Silli. Annagaraha. Khyari. Knake. Budmu. Rantu. Tamad. Bundu and Madar etc. blocks. In these blocks production of crops is only 30-40 percent. In addition to the above blocks and districts. survey should be conducted in rest of the blocks of Vananchal and relief work be started there so that migration of people can be checked.

[English]

SHRI SHIVANAND H. KOUJALGI (Belgaum) : Mr. Chairman. Sir. the Ministry of Surface Transport. Government of India. has called for the tenders for the construction of the by-pass road from Dharwar to Hubli under BOT. Though the tenders were called about one year back. they have not yet been accepted. On account of this. the Governemnt would incur heavy loss as the estimated cost is increasing day-by-day. Moreover. the road from Dharwar to Hubli is heaviliy damaged. Hence. I request the Government. through you. that the Ministry of Surface Transport be directed to accept the tenders immediately so that the construction work could be started as early as possible.

[Translation]

DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA (Damoh) : Mr. Chairman. Sir. Bundelkhand region is backward even after 50 years of independence. There is no industry in the entire region whereas minerals deposits are in abundance there. This region has a large deposits of diamond and granite but due to non exploitation the minerals it is still backward. Similarly. it has a unique cultural. historical and archaeological heritage. The greatmen born in this region have contributed for security and integrity of the country and led this country from time to time. It is necessary to develop the entire region of Bundelkhand as a tourist spot to keep this historical heritage intact and safe.

Apart from Khajuraho. Orchha, Kalinger. in Banda. Sarang temple. Brahaspati Kund. Chaumukhnath. Siddhnath at Panna. Kalehan. Hanuman Bhata. Nanchand, at Pawai, Bandakpur, Kundalpur. Singargarh. Nohta. Raneh at Damoh and the birth place of the great poet Jagnik. Safaour where capital of Skandgupta and Chandragupta was situated and where swamy Ramdas ji had installed the shivling and statue of Hanuman ji in the presence of Chhatrapati Shivaji and he inspired and cooperated Maharaj Chhatrasal to establish swarajya. are places of tourist interest. Similarly. Bheemkund, Jatashankar. Dronagiri. Nainagiri in Chhatarpur district and Naitional Park of Panna attract the tourists. Therefore. the Government should declare these places as a tourist spots for the development of Bundelkhand region and give co-operation for development of this region.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VARMA (Jalaun) : Mr. Chairman Sir. I would like to apprise you about the crisis of drinking water in Jhansi Mandal of Uttar Pradesh which is known as Bundelkhand. Sir. the Government of Uttar Pradesh has issued a new order on 24.11.1996 for Jhansi and Bundelkhand region to collect water tax on enhanced rates in all districts of Jhansi Mandal. There is a great resentment among the people of Bundelkhand due to this order and as a result thereof poor people are getting their water connections cut. I would like to urge upon the Central Government to withdraw the order regarding increased rates of water tax so that the people of Jhansi mandal can have a sign of relief.

[English]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH : Sir. I would like to draw the attention of the House to a serious problem. This issue is being raised here for the last fifteen to twenty years. You know. Sir. that Bengali is the language which brought the honour of Nobel Prize. and it is the language in which the National Song and the National Anthem were written. If somebody speaks in that language. they are being termed as foreigners! This is a shame on this country. I am talking about this with a heavy heart. You will be surprised to know that I am aware of seven to eight such cases.

Sir. in Mumbai city. particularly in the slum areas. whenever somebody speaks in the Bengali language. the Special Police are going there and catching them as Bangladeshis or foreigners. Neither their passport nor the voter's identity card is being accepted by them. They are extracting Rs. 500 to Rs. 3.000 for releasing them. What is this? We are living in India and it is a free country. For how many years should the Bengali speaking people suffer like this? Bengalis are living in Ahmedabad and in many other cities.

In Mumbai. I can cite the cases of Noorjehan Bibi and Zanab Abdul Razak. Even their passports have not been accpted as proof of their citizenship. and they are being taken into custody. These people have come from Gorakhpur. Bihar and West Bengal. They are being caught as Bangladeshis. Even some Tamil speaking people were caught and even though they spoke in Tamil. they were not released. They were branded as Bangladeshis! what is this? We know that foreigners should not have any right to stay in this country. But if they are Muslims. they are invariably being dragged out as Bangladeshis. This is a serious matter. It is a shame on the Shiv Sena. They have not only beaten the editor of a newspaper but they are also beating the

people. They are doing these types of things and the minority people and the Bengali speaking people are being dragged out as Bangladeshis...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE (Mumbai South-Central) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is wrong. This House is being mislead. This has never happened. This is wrong...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now you have mentioned whatever you wanted to mention. Please take your seat now. What can be done during Zero Hour?

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Prof. Rita Verma.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Only that will be go on record whatever Prof. Rita Verma speaks.*

(Interruptions)

PROF. RITA VERMA (Dhanbad) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House towards this fact that India and Bangladesh have signed an agreement for sharing of Ganga water during recent past. We should resolve dispute with our neighbouring countries and improve our relations with them but the Government of West Bengal should also have bonafide intentions with its neighbouring States. Bihar and Uttar Pradesh will have to suffer heavy loss due to this agreement. We also want that there should be no shortage of water but for that the States like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh cannot be kept dried. So far as the matter of sharing water is concerned, West Bengal has always neglected Bihar. In 1975, when an agreement was signed for sharing of water of Damodar river, which is the main reason for shortage of water in the Vananchal region, it was said that there is 34 thousand cusec feet water in the river and West Bengal needs 30 thousand cusec feet water. Therefore, after taking 30 thousand cusec ft. water to West Bengal should have to provide remaining water to Bihar. But the Government is continuously negelecting Bihar. There is 34 thousand cusec feet water available out of which 30 thousand cusec feet water is being taken by West Bengal and only four thousand cusec feet water is being given to Bihar. This is the main reason of drought in the Vananchal region. We are experiencing acute shortage of water and our crops are drying up for want of water. Mr. Chairman Sir, as per the report of new Irrigation Commission, there is 45 thousand cusec feet water available in Damodar river. Therefore sharing of water of Damodar river should be made again and West Bengal should have benafide intentions for Bihar as it is having with Bangladesh. I would also like to say that our colleagues from West Bengal will also have bonafide intentions in this regard...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : I cannot compel the Government to react thereon.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have raised the issue and the Governemnt has heard it.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have not called you. I have called Shri E. Ahmed.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : Sir, the Government has taken note of the feelings which have been expressed by Shri Hannan Mollah.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Ramashraya, you get time everyday. Please sit patiently.

[English]

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri) : Mr. Chairman, may I bring to the notice of the Government the grievances of our Indians living in foreign countries? Many of our Indian workers are eking their livelihood in the Gulf countries and the only mode of transport is the airline. Air India is earning substantial revenue from our Indians living abroad. But unfortunately Air India is always hiking the airfare according to its whims and fancies. Only on December 15 last, Air India had decided to hike the airfare from Qatar to India. After Air India had decided to hike the airfare from Qarter to India, all other international airlines also followed suit. I do not know why Air India is taking initiative to get more money from Indian nationals coming to India. At present, this is only from the Gulf countries like Qatar. Once it is started there is a small country like Qatar, from other countries like the UAE, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and everywhere also this airfare will be hiked. I would like to say that more than 80 per cent of the Indian population there, are living as labourers and their employers are not footing their bill for the airfare. Therefore, they are to pay from their own pocket. This unilateral, arbitrary and unacceptable decision of Air India is putting Indians living in Gulf countries to great hardship and difficulties.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to instruct Air India to reconsider this unilateral and arbitrary decision to hike the air fare from Qatar to India. Thank you.

* Not recorded